

Residential Street Level of Service

City Policy and Guideline

Worsening traffic congestion on arterial and collector roadways continue to divert traffic onto residential streets. Although each lane of a residential street could carry from 1,000 to 1,600 vehicles per hour, the quality of life along a residential street is impacted at far lower traffic levels.

The City's General Plan states the following, "Preserve peace and quiet in residential areas through circulation design that slows traffic flows and encourages safe driving practices." Since the City's General Plan is vague on the desired level of service of residential streets, Staff (City Traffic Committee) has formulated the Residential Street Level of Service categories shown as Exhibit "A". This exhibit is based on the desire stated in the General Plan and staff's experience with residents complaining about quality of life issues along residential streets. These peak hour volume, average daily traffic volume and vehicle speed thresholds closely match the degree of concern expressed to staff regarding the quality of life along residential streets and the relative need for traffic calming under these conditions.

This Residential Street Level of Service standard also will help staff to determine how new development will impact neighborhood streets from a Level of Service Standard or Quality of Life standard.

A Residential Street is defined by City Standards as any street that has a 56 foot right of way or less and/or with 28 feet of pavement width or less.

The following are the Level of Service (LOS) categories and there descriptions:

- **LOS "A"**

Describes living conditions where a residential street only carries traffic from the adjacent residences. It is very easy to walk across the street, ride bicycles and enter or exit residential driveways. Typical motor vehicle speeds are 25 MPH or less. During the peak traffic hour, one car passes down the street every two minutes. The typical traffic volume is under 300 vehicles per day with only 30 vehicles during the peak travel hour.

- **LOS "B"**

Describes living conditions where a residential street carries traffic from two residential blocks. It is easy to walk across the street, ride bicycles and enter or exit residential driveways. Often residents are concerned about vehicle speeds that have increased to 25-30 MPH. During the peak traffic hour, one car passes down the street every minute. The typical traffic volume is under 600 vehicles per day with 60 vehicles during the peak travel hour.

- **LOS “C”**

Describes living conditions where a residential street carries traffic from four residential blocks. It is relatively easy to walk across the street, ride bicycles and enter or exit residential driveways. Residents are concerned about vehicle speeds that have increased to over 30 MPH. Residents are also uncomfortable with vehicle volumes that have risen to 1,200 vehicles per day with 120 vehicles during the peak travel hour. During the peak traffic hour, one car passes down the street every 30 seconds.

- **LOS “D”**

Describes living conditions where a residential street carries traffic from six residential blocks. Increased caution is necessary when walking across the street, riding bicycles and entering or exiting residential driveways. Residents are very concerned about vehicle speeds that have increased to up to 35 MPH. Residents perceive that commuters are shortcutting on their street due to vehicle volumes up to 1,800 vehicles per day with 180 vehicles during the peak travel hour. During the peak traffic hour, one car passes down the street every 20 seconds.

- **LOS “E”**

Describes living conditions where a residential street carries traffic from eight residential blocks. Due to elevated vehicle speeds and volumes, a high level of caution is necessary when walking across the street, riding bicycles and entering or exiting residential driveways. Vehicle speeds have increased to 35 MPH or more. There is significant commuter shortcutting with up to 2,400 vehicles per day and 240 vehicles during the peak travel hour. It is increasingly difficult to exit driveways during the peak traffic hour with one car passing down the street every 15 seconds.

- **LOS “F”**

Describes living conditions where a residential street carries traffic from significantly more than eight residential blocks. Due to elevated vehicle speeds and volumes, a high level of caution is necessary when walking across the street, riding bicycles and entering or exiting residential driveways. Vehicle speeds have increased to 35 MPH or more. There is significant commuter shortcutting with over 2,400 vehicles per day and 240 vehicles during the peak travel hour. Exiting and entering driveways is difficult and requires approaching vehicles to stop for driveway traffic.